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NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONTRADICTIONS AMONG
IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES

By Su Lan

- COMMUNIST CHINA -

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NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONTRADICTIONS AMONG IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES

- COMMUNIST CHINA -

[Following is the translation of an article written by Su Lan in the Peiping Jen-min Jih-pao (People's Daily), 26 September 1960, page 6.]

Recently, extensive diplomatic activity has been going on among the countries of Western Europe. Following the meeting of Adenauer and De Gaulle at the end of July and that of MacMillan and Adenauer at the beginning of August, there were also several conferences among the heads of government and ministers of foreign affairs of the countries of Western Europe. According to reports, conferences of this type will continue to be held.

These bilateral conferences are continuously being held because of the constantly changing and prolonged power struggles found among the capitalist countries. Some of their activities show a desire to cooperate, others a desire to try to squeeze out the other fellow. Even though little is revealed of the matter discussed in the conferences, it is not difficult to see these countries are making new attempts to adjust relationships among themselves and with the United States, in order to set a new basis for beginning further struggles.

Part I

The several conferences and the recent series of events amply demonstrate the sharpness of the conflict among Britain, France and West Germany in the fight for leadership in Western Europe. From what has been disclosed of both meetings between De Gaulle and Adenauer and between MacMillan and Adenauer the following questions were discussed: the integration of Europe, the two opposing economic groups, the suppression of the independent movements and the distribution of the colonial areas (mainly the question of how to

control Africa) and the development of nuclear weapons in these countries, especially in regard to West Germany and its use of nuclear weapons for national defense. In the final analysis all these questions lend themselves to the problem of deciding who will become the real master of Western Europe.

De Gaulle proposed that the six countries of the common market should establish a "European Federation" with a permanent "Political Secretariat" in Paris, in addition to the Council of Heads of Government and the Council of Foreign Ministers. After decisions have been made on this major issue, France would be the representative spokesman for the six countries. A leadership nucleus would be made of three nations: the United States, Great Britain and France. This is another of France's attempts to organize a "third force" and to seize the political leadership of Western Europe. All along France has tried to make the "Common Market" the ascending ladder from which she might get hold of the power of leadership of Western Europe; and she has always feared any relationship between Great Britain and the "Common Market" as a potential obstacle to her ambition. For that reason too one senses the uneasiness of France at the meeting of MacMillan and Adenauer. Le Monde of Paris disclosed that De Gaulle understood very well that "once Britain joins any European group, France loses her hope of effecting the kind of superior influence that she feels herself capable of exerting on the Continent."

At present, in fact, France repeatedly demands a "French-German rapprochement," trying her very best to dismiss Great Britain from the European Continent. She thus shows very plainly her intent in the struggle for leadership. On the other hand, the continued increase of West Germany's economic strength and military power, especially its attempt to use nuclear armaments for national defense, certainly causes discomfort in France also. Under these conditions, among the capitalist class of France there is beginning to appear a wavering desire to better its relationship with Britain in order to join hands and control the extension of greater power by West Germany.

Mendes de France declared in an article released on 6 September that "There are two countries that can cause the regeneration of the West; it is only necessary that they be united. They are France and Great Britain." In reality, within the "Common Market" the relationship between France and West Germany is by no means harmonious; on the contrary, it is more and more evident they are divided on the question of distributing the profits of their monopoly capital. For example, after the industrialists of West Germany opposed the

plan of Halstein to speed up the operations of the "Common Market", there has been open disagreement between France and West Germany on agricultural policy.

West Germany's Die Welt carefully pointed out that the danger of such an "open explosion" is likely to cause a "deadlock" in "European Integration" plans. Of course there is not going to be a complete break yet in their relationship in the monopolizing of capital in the Common Market, but it is very clear that in light of the further development of the "Common Market," there already appears to be a fissure in this economic group.

The conferences reveal that Great Britain is making every effort to break through her condition of isolation on the Continent, after her defeat in the "Free Trade Area" plan. Recently, the policy which Great Britain has taken toward her allied countries on the Continent wavers between being friendly to France for the purpose of controlling Germany and vice versa. In this way she hopes to build up a new balance of power in order to raise her own position and control affairs in West Europe.

On the questions of checking West Germany's arming with nuclear weapons and preventing West Germany's expansion into their colonial territories, Great Britain and France take the same stand. But Great Britain certainly shows signs of uneasiness towards De Gaulle's ambition to dominate Western Europe. Strongly opposing De Gaulle's idea for a "Political Secretariat," Britain persists with her own proposal for a "European Custom Union," hoping thereby to break into Continental Europe and, further, to dissolve the Common Market.

One notices that on the question of the two economic groups of Western Europe, the position Great Britain takes has always been at odds with that of France. The attitude of France is the basic obstacle in Great Britain's coming to terms with the "Common Market." The reason why Great Britain shows such "intimacy" towards West Germany at present is that she is making another attempt to take advantage of the internal contradiction of the "Common Market" and alter her position of forced isolation. So far, even in answer to the request of France that she become a constituent member of the "Atomic Club," Great Britain's attitude has been one of vacillation. She has not given her active support.

That is only one side of the British policy. Because of her hatred for the socialist countries and her desire to break the alliance of France and West Germany against herself, the other side of the foreign policy of Great Britain is as follows: support of the militarism of West Germany in her rearmament, support of a continuation of the Cold War attitude

on the whole question of Germany and West Berlin. Just recently British Defense Minister Walkinson and the Defense Minister of West Germany, Strauss, held a discussion in which they decided to manufacture guided missiles in order that the two countries may enjoy further military cooperation. It was also revealed that in the course of the meeting between MacMillan and Adenauer, Great Britain showed an uncompromising attitude in support of West Germany on the question of West Berlin in exchange for "an advantageous position" in the economy of Western Europe.

Nevertheless, one still senses Britain's extreme uneasiness towards West Germany's gradual expansion of military power. She is, in fact, absolutely opposed to the proposal of the United States to arm West Germany with the guided missile "Polaris" and make the latter a nuclear power in NATO because that would definitely infringe on and curtail her attempt to dominate Western Europe. What Britain wants is a West Germany that would only rearm herself within the bounds permitted by and controllable by Britain. Without a doubt, a hope like that will never be realized.

France's suggestion for a "Political Secretariat" and Britain's proposal for a "European Custom Union" are again quite at odds with the wishes of West Germany. The latter demands that in the plan for integration, the "Common Market," the coal and steel community, and Euratom should all become a unified organization--a power structure that goes beyond the boundaries of individual countries. In an organization of this kind, West Germany would be willing to lend her economic strength to become, in actual fact, the "master of the alliance." What West Germany proposed clearly reflects her ambition to take hold of the leadership of Western Europe by monopolizing all capital. At the same time, to a limited extent, it also reflects the attitude of the US towards the problems of Western Europe. It is a known fact that because imperialist America has consistently aided West Germany in its reconstruction, Adenauer has often become the representative spokesman of the US in conferences between the Bonn Government and France and Great Britain.

West Germany, because of certain political and military restrictions imposed by international agreements, is still only a second rate nation in the world, despite the fact that she occupies a leading position in terms of economic strength. She is anxious to break through those restrictions and to knock over the existing balance of power. The Bonn Government, besides continually increasing her economic power and attempting to uplift her political position, is also trying to strengthen her military power. She is

eager to obtain America's guided missile, the "Polaris", and also to possess nuclear weapons of her own making.

On the same day that MacMillan arrived in Bonn, the newspaper published by the Bonn Government proposed that the navy of West Germany become a modern force equipped with nuclear weapons. Britain's Daily Express also revealed that during the Britain-West Germany Conference, "Adenauer, full of worries, repeatedly gave his reasons for reinforcing the defenses of Europe," West Germany knows very well that in her feverish effort to expand her military power, especially in regard to obtaining nuclear weapons, she naturally arouses the suspicion and fear of Britain and France; thus, she is carefully making use of the present conflict between the latter two countries.

On the one hand, West Germany repeatedly states the importance of a Paris-Bonn axis. She offers economic aid to France for the latter's planned nuclear armaments, thereby forcing France to cooperate with her in producing nuclear weapons. She promises to support De Gaulle on the question of Algeria in exchange for France's speaking on her behalf regarding Germany and West Berlin; she also tries her best to prevent a renewed alliance between France and Great Britain against her.

On the other hand, Bonn openly shows her dislike of De Gaulle's attempt to establish a "Big Three" and to a certain extent attempts to improve relations with Britain. Die Welt of West Germany declared, significantly, that "what is to be done now is to make up for what has been neglected previously. In addition to maintaining friendship between France and Germany, nothing must be done to harm our relationship with Britain. We must instead see that is is on an equal basis." The rapprochement of Britain and West Germany shows that the Bonn Government is not willing to be tied down by the "Common Market" so as to feel herself blocked in any way in her efforts to expand her trade markets. Therefore, she is trying to play the role of the "negotiator" between the "Six Countries" and "Seven Countries" groups.

In commenting upon the conference between Britain and West Germany the Times said "Adenauer shows a willingness to help the British Commonwealth to continue the system of tax-free importation into the "Common Market." Such a report is an important comment on the policy of West Germany toward the economic question(s) of Western Europe. What is worthy of attention is that West Germany not only hopes to get Britain into the "Common Market" for her own benefit economically, but also is attempting to prevent De Gaulle from dominating Western Europe politically. West Germany intends to use

this as bait to tempt Britain to support her plan for nuclear armament.

From the above description of the complicated relationships existing among [Western] powers--their seducing and subverting of one another, France's effort to raise her international position, Britain's attempt to break through her isolation by more constructive measures and West Germany's continual development of her economic and political power--we see that the conflict among the countries of Western Europe has in no way lessened but has become only more involved. Whether or not they hold conferences or have other forms of diplomatic activities, the fact remains that they only want to join hands at certain times on certain problems in order to attack the other side. Therefore, such efforts will not mitigate the struggle among them. On the contrary, they indicate the fermentation of new and more violent conflicts in the future.

Part II

From the comments of the many news publications of the West, one can see in the fluctuating relationships of these countries that, besides fighting for the leadership of Western Europe, they also hope to re-organize the power of the countries of Western Europe in order to consolidate their position and their right to speak out in the Western Camp. This activity comes at a time when the influence of the US on Western Europe is waning. Meetings between Adenauer and De Gaulle, and between MacMillan and De Gaulle all seem to indicate that the countries of Western Europe, especially France and Britain, tending as they do to drift away from the US, have reached another stage of development.

It is under the following conditions that there has been a strengthening of the separatist trend among the Western European nations. Recently, new crises have occurred because of the nationalistic movements for independence on the continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America. There have been new developments in movements for world peace. After the destruction of the Summit Conference of the four powers by the US, her imperialistic mask of peace was completely exposed before the people of the world. Because of this, the US' influence declined considerably in the imperialist camp. Its position of leadership in the capitalist world was somewhat shaken. The countries of Western Europe then attempted to raise their own positions in international affairs as the power of the US appeared to weaken among them. Even the Reuter

News Agency had blunt words: "Since the failure of the Summit Conference there have been changes to the disadvantage of the US in the world situation." Therefore, the objective of the recent meetings was "to try by all means to deal with and erase the weaknesses of NATO and the leadership of the US in the West." Moreover, the US is presently much too occupied with her own elections to be concerned with the affairs of Western Europe. The nations of Western Europe in fact look upon this as the most opportune moment to force the retreat of American influence.

It is not to be doubted that in the meetings mentioned, the question of the relationship between the US and the Western European nations was touched upon. West Germany's Allgemein Zeitung in fact pointed out in an article on the meeting between Britain and West Germany that "one main issue discussed at the Bonn Conference was the part Europe will play in the future in world politics." Both before and after the conference, the papers of the West, one after the other, revealed that Western European countries were in favor of undertaking "political negotiations" not only to demand a greater voice and increase their own weight in NATO. They were also trying to gradually eliminate American control of Western Europe.

The Sunday Times of England openly declared that Britain, France and West Germany should "lead" Western Europe. Reporter Earl [?] of Reuter News Agency wrote long before the opening of the meeting between MacMillan and Adenauer that at the present time, because of the declining influence of the US in the world, "many nations have adopted a new outlook in regard to the question of 'integration of (Western) Europe.'" The British magazine Economist showed displeasure towards the US by openly saying, "NATO as a military alliance is almost non-existent; it would have been better to call it camouflage for a policy controlled by the Pentagon." France's Combat advocated that "... in order to prevent an American brand of isolationism, in order not to let America dominate the West and in order to include Africa within the sphere of influence of the West, a 'political Europe' must be established."

Before and after the two meetings and especially in a talk given at a news conference on 5 September, De Gaulle repeatedly announced his intention to modify certain articles of the North Atlantic Treaty. On the question of the Congo he even suggested the "establishment of a three power governing group that would be responsible for the military strategy of the West." This, in substance, would limit the expansion of the US in Africa and decrease the latter's influence in

Western Europe.

The struggle between the US and the Western European nations is in actuality a long term conflict of checking and counter-checking one another. France has always protested against US military control and De Gaulle has indicated that he is against the so-called 'plan of integration' for NATO. France also refused to let the US establish a guided missile base or let French aircraft be incorporated into the Atlantic Commanding System. She even wanted returned to her control of her naval force in the Mediterranean.

As for Britain, on one hand she makes good use of the 'British-American Alliance' to seek domination of Western Europe; on the other hand, she also makes use of her important position in the capitalist world to make bargains with the US in this struggle. Politically, whenever the US meets defeat with her aggressive policies, Britain denounces the US as being incompetent. This was especially so right after the US had broken up the Summit Conference. British newspapers did not let by one single embarrassing diplomatic situations in which the US was involved. This was an effort to discredit the US and to further her own desire for joint leadership with the US of the West. In military affairs, in spite of US opposition, Britain has insisted on having her own independent threatening power by manufacturing in part her own guided missiles and nuclear weapons. She has always shown dissatisfaction towards the US' policy of controlling NATO single-handedly.

Not long after MacMillan returned to England at the end of the Bonn Conference, the British news world started an anti-Norstad movement. Norstad is an American general and Commander of the Allied Forces of NATO. Reuter News purposely created an atmosphere favorable to the spreading among the representative officers of the different countries in NATO of the view that "the Americans are holding far too many important positions in the Allied Forces High Command, if they haven't got hold of all the key positions yet." The Daily Telegraph also declared, "it is now time to adopt a new outlook in regard to the military strategy included in the present plan for protecting Western Europe." Economically, Britain also shows open displeasure towards US support of the "Common Market."

Naturally, it is not to be expected that the US would regard lightly such a "rebellious" attitude on the part of the Western European countries. In fact, just recently, Washington has given much thought to the tightening of her grip on Western Europe. Early in October of last year, both in a report given in the Senate concerning policy

towards Western Europe and in the "Ten-Year Plan of NATO" published in West Germany by Atchison, the US has emphasized her plan for "intensive leadership" and "direct leadership" of Western Europe. Evidently, the objective of the US, besides ensuring her own position as head of NATO and stopping Western Europe from claiming equal rights with herself, is to decrease the effect of the British-American alliance so as not to let Britain enjoy any kind of superiority in the Western Alliance. The US Secretary of State, Herter, also made it a special point to proclaim that even during election time, the US would be able to make serious commitments diplomatically.

The New York Herald Tribune, in commenting upon the MacMillan-Adenauer meeting, warned the people not to forget that NATO "is a basic factor which contributes strength to the West and that the latter depends for its growth on the US." On 6 September, State Department spokesman [Lincoln] White, after listening to De Gaulle's statement, still said that the US would not change its outlook in regard to NATO and re-emphasized the execution of the "Ten-Year Plan." From this it can be seen that the US intends to use NATO to pass her "Plan of Integration" systematically so as to consolidate her position of leadership.

In military affairs, she intends to lower the positions of Britain and France but raise that of West Germany and to use such items as "Multi-nation Euratom" to restrict the "Independent nuclear threatening power" of Britain and France. In politics, she hopes to give nominally greater policy-making power to NATO and to treat all big and small constituents of NATO as "equal partners" with equal rights to determine policy in order to counteract France and Britain's "independent diplomacy" and the "principle of domination by the greater powers." In economics, US wants to have direct control over the economic affairs of Western Europe, and hold the reins of leadership in her own hands. She wishes to reorganize the "European Economic Cooperative," now controlled by Britain, so that she might change it into a kind of "Atlantic Economic Integrated Body" in which both the US and Canada could take part.

Therefore, the central policy of the US in Western Europe from now on is to deal with Britain and France separately, to continue her aid to West Germany, to make West Germany the backbone of NATO and also the flag-waver of Western Europe's "Plan of Integration." The result of putting such policies into effect will not soften but only heighten the conflict among these nations. At the same time, it will weave the US' struggle for command of Western Europe and the

fight for domination among the Western European nations themselves into one fabric that will further complicate the whole situation.

Part III

In the final analysis, these intricately interwoven contradictions within the imperialist group reflect the fact that these monopoly groups can no longer come to terms in the field of economics because of the mutual loss and gain involved. The formation and development of socialist markets have resulted in the shrinking in size of capitalist markets and greater conflict in the production and consumption of the goods of the capitalists. This has complicated the threat to the economy and shortened the period of transition. All this cannot but cause the imperialists' scramble for markets and spheres of influence to become more and more acute and bitter, and cause the ebb and flow in power of these nations to become more frequent and unpredictable.

The decline of US power in the imperialist group, the development of a drift of Western European nations away from the US and the mutual distrust and competition of Britain, France and West Germany is the inevitable outcome of changes in their economic strength. After the 1957-58 economic crisis, the competing power of capitalist America in foreign markets dropped to its lowest point since the end of the war. In those two years, the percentage ratio of export in comparison with other capitalist countries went from 23.3 percent down to 21.3 percent. In 1959, for the first time since the end of the war, the US' trade with Western Europe was in the red. The international trade balance sheet also showed red to the amount of 71 million dollars at the end of two years. The outflow of gold and American dollars amounted to 33 million dollars. The amount of gold reserve has now decreased to below 190 million dollars, the lowest point in 20 years. The Western European countries which have long been depending on the US have gained considerable economic strength. The foreign trade percentages of both France and West Germany have indeed increased in the two year period. The one-time united capitalists' market has been divided into three parts, making the situation more difficult for the US to maintain firm control over Western Europe.

The fact that the "Common Market" and the "Small Free Trade Area" are opposed to each other, both building high tariffs in this battle for trade, is bound to influence the

US in her commerce with Western Europe. Moreover, any breach economically will necessarily deepen the political breach within NATO. This again is not at all advantageous to the strengthening of the US' position of leadership. But the US is also afraid that the "Six Countries" and "Seven Countries" groups will join hands and form an economic group that would exclude non-European countries. That would not only keep the US from taking advantage of the existing conflict but presents the dangerous possibility of a united Western Europe taking a common stand against her.

All along the policy of US has been to make use of the discord among the two economic groups and interfere in the economic affairs of Western Europe so as to tighten her grip over them. It was the US who proposed the formation of the "Six Countries", the "Seven Countries" and the "North Atlantic Integrated Body"--which includes the US and Canada--so as to prevent Western Europe from crowding her out or resisting her. But the trouble is the minute this plan was revealed, it met with the downright opposition of Britain and France.

The fight among the imperialist countries for economic territory is beginning more and more to take on the characteristics of a redistribution of spheres of influence and colonies. The US and West Germany, who possesses no colonies, are just starting to throw their spearheads of expansion in the direction of the oversea spheres of influence of France and Britain. American capital and products are making threatening advances into the traditional British markets. Before the war, exports in British pounds were 2.3 times greater than that of the US, but now is only 1.4 times greater. In 1950, the investment of England in her Commonwealth (including Canada) was still 20 percent more than that of the US; now the latter has exceeded her by 10 percent.

West Germany is also taking over markets that used to belong to Britain. For some time now West Germany has been able to surpass Britain in the amount of trade carried on in Western Europe. In the countries of the Middle East, West Germany has also overtaken Britain in becoming the first or second in rank. From 1950 to 1958, the amount of products imported into the Commonwealth countries from West Germany multiplied eight-fold on the average. During this period the increase was actually ten fold in the cases of India and Canada. Besides that, West Germany's loans to India now amount to over nine million marks, and she has also promised to make a loan of 25 million rupees for India's "Third Five-Year Plan."

In the past, France has always exercised very strict control over her spheres of influence, making it very difficult for the US and West Germany to invest in her territories. But recently, with French monopolists anxious to "develope" natural resources in Africa and in real need of capital, and Africans asking for independence one after the other, the US and West Germany have found this the most appropriate moment to extend their own economic power. As the US waved the flag of the United Nations to intervene in the Congo, one can surmise that she might use the same method to drive out Britain and France, especially, and deprive them of the colonial benefits they enjoy in Africa. All this cannot but help cause fear in France and Britain and cause them to take more active measures of retaliation. This is seen in Britain's every effort to export more capital to fortify her overseas areas of investment and in the French increase of export capital to an annual figure of nine millions in US dollars.

The contradictions within the imperialist group evolve from these deep-seated economic bases. This deep economic root makes it conclusive that the conflict among them cannot be settled by negotiations or conferences. Facts continually prove and will continue to prove that the process of disintegration of the imperialist group into fragments is gaining momentum.